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and when any accused wants to defend himself, there is no possibility of getting a conviction. Will Government look into this matter?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, so far as that question is concerned, if any lacuna in the Act is pointed out by the Court, certainly we can take immediate action to rectify it."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, if it is the intention of the Government of Madras to take a firm action or decision in banning cross-word puzzles, may I know why some of the Ministers of the State of Madras are indirectly encouraging this kind of cross-word puzzles by presiding over prize distribution functions . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—" The main question is about cotton market."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Yes, Sir. Arising from the answer given by the Hon. Minister regarding banning of cross-word puzzles, may I know why some of the Ministers are taking part in prize distribution functions? I have seen advertisements displayed on the buses plying in the City of Madras informing that some prominent members of the Cabinet and ex-Ministers are taking part in the celebrations got up for distributing prizes."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Because it has not yet been prohibited, Sir."

* 1388 *Q.*—SRI D. DASARATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of persons sentenced in the City of Madras for betting on New York Cotton prices; and

(*b*) whether any Government servant or official is involved in such a betting?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) The number of persons sentenced in the City of Madras for betting on New York Cotton prices is as follows :—

1951—279.
1952—497.
1953—2,389.

" (*b*) No, Sir."

SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR :—" Sir, may I know whether any investigation was made by the Government into the Tamil Bulletin called ' Exposure of Secrets of New York Cotton ', so far as the ' secrets ' are concerned and whether the Police are encouraging these and are directly involved in these? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, I am unable to accept the allegations made by the hon. Member against the Police, namely, that they are colluding in this. As a matter of fact, in 1953 there were as many as 2,389 cases of conviction."

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SRI V. R. NAGARAJAN :—" Sir, may I know if betting on New York Cotton prizes is more remunerative than solving cross-word puzzles and if so, what is the comparative dividend paid in each? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" How does this arise out of the main question? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I have no personal experience of either. If the hon. Member could communicate his experience, I am prepared to take it."

*Handloom workers' strike in Chirakkal taluk, North Malabar.*

* 1389 Q.—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state the steps taken by the Government to bring about a settlement between the handloom workers and factory-owners of Chirakkal taluk, North Malabar, in view of the strike situation?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" On receipt of reports regarding the closure of the handloom factories in Chirakkal taluk, etc., the Commissioner of Labour was asked to take up conciliation. The Commissioner of Labour who enquired into the matter advised the workers to resume work. The workers accordingly resumed work. It is since reported that all the factories that had to be closed due to strike have re-opened."

*Restoration of the wage-cut to the handloom weavers of Chirakkal taluk, Malabar.*

* 1390 Q.—SRI K. P. GOPALAN (on behalf of Sri P. K. Gopalakrishnan) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have received any representation from the handloom weavers of Chirakkal taluk, Malabar district, regarding wage-cut; and

(b) the steps the Government have taken to restore the wage-cut?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (a) Yes, Sir.

" (b) As it is open to the workers to seek redress by filing complaints for short payment under the Payment of Wages Act or under section 33-A of the Industrial Disputes Act, no interference on the part of the Government was considered necessary."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Sir, are Government aware of the fact that even now the factory-owners are taking forcible signatures from the workers consenting to reduction of wages of the workers? "